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ITEM NO: WH-64

DATE: 20 MARCH 1974

SUBJECT: INITIAL PUBLIC WORLD REACTION TO THE PRESIDENT'S  
REMARKS IN HOUSTON ON MARCH 19

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IN FRANCE, SOURCES DESCRIBED AS "FRENCH OFFICIALS":

--APPRECIATED THE PRESIDENT'S "MORE CONCILIATORY STANCE,"  
PARTICULARLY HIS PRAISE OF FOREIGN MINISTER JOBERT'S  
CALL FOR MODERATION IN THE US-EUROPEAN DISPUTE.

--CONCLUDE THAT FRANCE HAS ADOPTED "A STRATEGY OF COURTEOUS  
DIPLOMACY," BUT ADD THAT THE "RESTRAINED" FRENCH RESPONSE  
TO THE PRESIDENT'S STATEMENTS IN CHICAGO ON MARCH 15 MADE  
IT CLEAR THAT FRANCE "WILL NOT BE STAMPEDED" INTO CHANGING  
ITS OWN IDEAS ON FRENCH AND EUROPEAN INDEPENDENCE.

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FRENCH JOURNALISTS WROTE THAT THE PRESIDENT:

--"HAS EATEN HIS WORDS" AND "RETREATED" ON TROOP WITHDRAWALS  
BECAUSE THESE WOULD HAVE DISASTROUS LONG-TERM EFFECTS FOR  
THE UNITED STATES.

--WARNED EUROPE AND "AMERICAN PUBLIC OPINION" AGAINST  
ISOLATIONISM, TELLING HIS "AT LEAST 50 MILLION TELEVISION  
VIEWERS" THAT EUROPE'S SECURITY IS OF DIRECT CONCERN TO THE  
UNITED STATES.

--WILL NOT VISIT EUROPE UNTIL THE NINE MEMBERS OF THE EUROPEAN  
COMMUNITY UNDERSTAND THE US POSITION BETTER.

--"PROBABLY HAS REASON TO USE THE STICK AND CARROT ALTERNATIVELY",  
BUT MUST RECOGNIZE THAT NOT ALL THE MODERATE EUROPEAN  
REACTIONS TO HIS CHICAGO STATEMENTS WERE FAVORABLE TO THE  
US POINT OF VIEW.

IN BONN, WEST GERMAN FOREIGN MINISTER SCHEEL TOLD PARLIAMENT:

--THAT EUROPE IS NOT SEEKING A CONFRONTATION WITH THE UNITED  
STATES;

--THAT THE WEST GERMAN GOVERNMENT WOULD "DO ALL IN ITS POWER

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TO STRENGTHEN COOPERATION WITH THE UNITED STATES" IN THE  
FACE OF TROUBLES IN THE ATLANTIC ALLIANCE WHICH HE SAID  
ARE "OF A SERIOUS NATURE".

IN BRUSSELS, COMMON MARKET OFFICIALS:

--CONSIDERED THAT THE PRESIDENT'S "SOFTER LINE TOWARDS EUROPE  
IS A STEP TOWARD DEFUSING THE HIGHLY CHARGED ATMOSPHERE OF  
TRANS-ATLANTIC RELATIONS" AND MAKES CLEAR THAT BOTH SIDES  
WOULD LIKE TO GET AWAY FROM POLEMICS TO TALK FRANKLY AND  
TRY TO UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER'S FEARS;

--RECEIVED "WITH SOME RELIEF" THE PRESIDENT'S REASSURANCES  
THAT HE DOES NOT SUPPORT CALLS FOR UNILATERAL WITHDRAWAL OF  
US TROOPS FROM EUROPE;

--DESCRIBED CLOSE US-WESTERN EUROPEAN COOPERATION "IN ALL  
FIELDS" AS "VITAL" FOR MUTUAL PROSPERITY AND WORLD POLITICAL  
STABILITY;

--CONSIDERED THAT THE PRESIDENT'S "SLIGHTLY MELLOWER TONE"  
AND THE DETERMINATION OF BRITISH FOREIGN SECRETARY CALLAGHAN  
TO STAY OUT OF ANY "STRUGGLE AGAINST AMERICA" AS OPENING THE

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WAY FOR A NEW EFFORT TO END US-COMMON MARKET RIFTS.

IN BRUSSELS, THE INFLUENTIAL MODERATE NEWSPAPER LE SOIR WROTE OF TRANS-ATLANTIC DIFFERENCES AS "A FAMILY QUARREL" AGAINST A BACKGROUND OF BASIC SOLIDARITY, BUT WARNED OF POSSIBLE POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC EFFECTS.

FROM MOSCOW, TASS REPORTED THAT THE PRESIDENT:

--"HAS EMPHASIZED A MAJOR ROLE OF COOPERATION" BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE SOVIET UNION IN ENSURING PERMANENT PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST TO MEET THE INTERESTS OF BOTH COUNTRIES AS WELL AS THE COUNTRIES OF THE AREA, AND THAT WITHOUT US-SOVIET COOPERATION THERE CAN BE NO PERMANENT PEACE THERE;

--"TRUSTED" THAT THIS WOULD BE HIGH ON THE AGENDA FOR HIS MEETING WITH GENERAL SECRETARY BREZHNEV LATER IN THE YEAR;  
--SAID THAT TALKS BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND WEST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES ON PROBLEMS OF SECURITY HAVE GONE "VERY WELL", BUT THAT DISCUSSIONS IN THE POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC FIELD "HAVE NOT GONE WELL." AS A RESULT, THE PRESIDENT HAS

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POSTPONED HIS VISIT TO WESTERN EUROPE. CLASS QUOTED THE  
PRESIDENT AS SAYING THAT THE COMMON MARKET COUNTRIES  
"HAVE ACTUALLY TAKEN A POSITION WHICH IS HOSTILE TO THE  
UNITED STATES."

IN TOKYO THE NATIONAL DAILY YOMIURI SHIMBUN EDITORIALIZED  
THAT:

--"RELATIONS BETWEEN THE US AND WESTERN EUROPE HAVE BEEN  
BADLY SHAKEN, WITH BITTERNESS REPLACING AN ALLIANCE ONCE  
BASED ON MUTUAL TRUST";

--"FRENCH HOSTILITY HAS BEEN MATCHED BY THE ACRIMONY OF  
PRESIDENT NIXON AND SECRETARY OF STATE KISSINGER".

THE JAPANESE EDITORIAL ALSO STATED THAT:

--EXPANSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY HAS NOT LED TO FULL  
EUROPEAN UNITY BUT HAS INCREASED A SENSE OF EUROPEAN  
INDEPENDENCE AND, SINCE THEY FEAR DOMINATION BY THE TWO  
SUPERPOWERS, IT IS ONLY NATURAL THAT THE EUROPEANS ARE  
TRYING TO ESTABLISH THEIR OWN IDENTITY IN WORLD POLITICS.

"THE MAJOR PROBLEM IN US-EUROPEAN RELATIONS NOW IS HOW

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TO RECONCILE THE NEED FOR COOPERATION WITH THIS QUEST FOR INDEPENDENCE. THIS CAN ONLY BE ACCOMPLISHED BY A RESTORATION OF TRUST BETWEEN WASHINGTON AND ITS ALLIES."

IN TOKYO, THE BUSINESS-ORIENTED DAILY NIHON KEIZAI SHIMBUN EDITORIALIZED THAT:

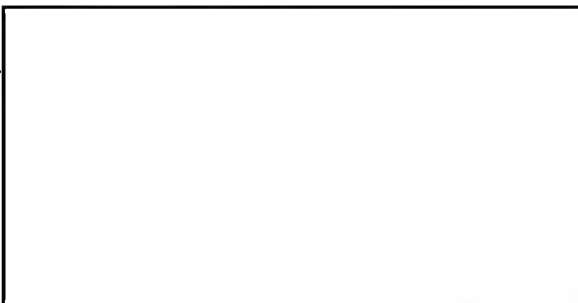
--THE STATEMENTS FROM THE PRESIDENT AND DR KISSINGER "CAME AS A COMPLETE SURPRISE, BUT IF WESTERN EUROPE AND JAPAN RESPOND WITH UNNECESSARY STATEMENTS AND ACTIONS THAT WORSEN US IRRITATION, THERE IS NO WAY OF AVOIDING THE FATE OF 'A JOINT COLLAPSE' OF THE ALLIANCE."

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